



26 September 2025

Deputy Ruairí Ó Murchú, TD
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

PQ 50727/25

To ask the Minister for Health to provide an update on waiting times for cardiac rehabilitation programmes; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Ó Murchú,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in relation to the above parliamentary question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have consulted with the National Heart Programme (NHP) on your question and have been informed that the following outlines the position.

Waiting times for cardiac rehabilitation (CR) are not routinely collected at present.

The HSE's Model of Care for Integrated Cardiac Rehabilitation 2023 (MoC CR)¹ recommends collection of activity and outcome data by services. To support implementation of the model's recommendations, an in-depth understanding of current hospital and community services (hubs) was identified as a requirement.

To this end, a structured overview of hospital and hub-based Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) sites was completed to identify resources, supports and training needs required to advance implementation of the MoC CR nationally. An Overview of Cardiac Rehabilitation Services in Ireland November 2024², recently published, reported variation in waiting times for Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) throughout the country. Waiting times for the commencement of phase III (denoted as the date of the initial assessment) varied from 2-96 weeks, with median waiting times of 12 weeks.

Recommendation 19 of the National Review of Cardiac Services (NRCS) 2023³, published earlier this year, sets out that all patients, following a cardiac event, or those diagnosed with Heart Failure, should be offered and have access to an appropriate CR programme. An implementation plan for the NRCS is currently being progressed by the HSE, with CR identified as an initial priority.

Funding was allocated for new service developments of cardiovascular services in 2025, to support the implementation and evaluation of the HSE's Model of Care for Integrated Cardiac Rehabilitation (2023)¹ in two Integrated Health Area (IHA) regions in the Health Region HSE West and North West.

This project is a proof of concept of implementation of the HSE's Model of Care for Integrated Cardiac Rehabilitation. It will address critical gaps in cardiac rehabilitation teams in two Integrated Health Areas (IHAs) in HSE West & North West, by recruiting additional posts, to convene complete integrated cardiac rehabilitation teams, enabling teams to deliver and evaluate an end-to-end implementation of the Model of Care for Integrated Cardiac Rehabilitation. The objectives of this project are to deliver a timely, high quality, equitable, person-centred CR service, while offering patient choice and access to a standardised CR programme and reduce waiting times.

Thirteen new posts have been funded across four hospitals and three hubs in the region to support this project. Metrics including waiting times, clinical and patient-reported impacts will be collected and evaluated in this proof of concept project in HSE West and North West. Learnings will be shared across all six health regions.



I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Anne Horgan
General Manager

References:

1. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/model-of-care-for-integrated-cardiac-rehabilitation.pdf>
2. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/an-overview-of-cardiac-rehabilitation-services-in-ireland.pdf>
3. <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/national-review-of-adult-specialist-cardiac-services-in-ireland.pdf>